

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the claims are requested in view of the above amendments and the following remarks. Claims 1, 7, 16, 19, 27, 34, 35, 37 and 41 have been amended. Support for the claim amendments may be found in the specification and claims as originally filed. No new matter has been added. Claims 6, 20, 26 and 38 have been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer.

Upon entry of this amendment, claims 1-5, 7-19, 21-25, 27-37 and 39-46 will be pending in the present application, with claims 1, 8, 12, 16, 19, 27, 30, 34, 35, 37, 41 and 44 being independent.

Applicants thank Examiner Hicks for the courtesies extended to applicants' representative, Mr. Sung Kim, during a telephone interview conducted on July 16, 2007. The substance of that interview is incorporated in the remarks that follow.

1. Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103**A. Obviousness in view of Lepien and Kephart et al.**

Claims 1, 2, 10 and 13-16 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Lepien (US 6,636,850) in view of Kephart et al. (US 7,051,277). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

The Office Action on page 45 concedes that the prior art neither teaches nor suggests the element of stopping the search for candidate records once a candidate record of a certain degree of similarity has been found. Therefore, as discussed during the interview, Lepien and Kephart et al., alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the elements of wherein once a likely reference record that matches the evaluation data record with a specified degree of certainty is found, further searching for records in the reference table is stopped, as included in amended independent claim 1. Independent claim 16 has been amended to include similar elements. As a result, claims 1 and 16 are allowable.

Claims 2, 10 and 13-15 depend from claim 1. As discussed above, claim 1 is allowable. For at least this reason, and the features recited therein, claims 2, 10 and 13-15 are also allowable.

For at least the reasons above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 1, 2, 10 and 13-16 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

B. Obviousness in view of Lepien, Kephart et al. and Califano

Claims 3, 9, and 17 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lepien in view of Kephart et al. and in further view of Califano (US 5,577,249). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

As discussed above, Lepien and Kephart et al. fail to disclose or suggest all of the elements of independent claims 1 and 16. Califano fails to cure this defect.

Califano discloses a method for finding sequences of tokens identical or similar to a reference sequence of tokens in one or more original strings of tokens within a database having one or more original strings (see col. 2, lines 53-56; col. 3, lines 12-20). The Office Action applies Califano in asserting that the elements specifically recited in dependent claims 3, 9 and 17 are disclosed by the prior art. However, even assuming *arguendo* that Califano discloses the elements specifically recited in dependent claims 3, 9 and 17, Califano still fails to teach or suggest the elements of wherein once a likely reference record that matches the evaluation data record with a specified degree of certainty is found, further searching for records in the reference table is stopped, as included, in some form, in independent claims 1 and 16. Therefore, since Lepien, Kephart et al. and Califano, alone or in combination, fail to disclose or suggest all of the elements of claims 1 and 16, these claims are allowable.

Claims 3 and 9 depend from claim 1. Claim 17 depends from claim 16. As discussed above, claims 1 and 16 are allowable. For at least this reason, and the features recited therein, claims 3, 9 and 17 are also allowable.

For at least the reasons above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 3, 9 and 17 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

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C. Obviousness in view of Lepien, Kephart et al., Califano and Ananthakrishna

Claims 4-7, 11, 18-26, 28-29, 31-40, 42-43, and 45-46 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lepien in view of Kephart et al. further in view of Califano and further in view of Ananthakrishna et al. ("Eliminating Duplicates in Data Warehouses", Proceedings of the 28th International Conference on Very Large Databases (VLDB) 2002, Hong Kong and referred to hereinafter as Ananthakrishna). Applicants respectfully traverse this rejection for at least the following reasons.

As discussed above, the Office Action on page 45 concedes that the prior art neither teaches nor suggests the element of stopping the search for candidate records once a candidate record of a certain degree of similarity has been found. Therefore, as discussed during the interview, Lepien, Kephart et al., Califano and Ananthakrishna, alone or in combination, fail to teach or suggest the elements of wherein once a likely reference record that matches the evaluation data record with a specified degree of certainty is found, further searching for records in the reference table is stopped, as included in independent claim 1. Independent claims 16, 19, 34, 35 and 37 have been amended to include similar elements. As a result, claims 1, 16, 19, 34, 35 and 37 are allowable.

Claims 4-5 and 11 depend from claim 1. Claim 18 depends from claim 16. Claims 21-25, 28-29 and 31-33 depend from claim 19. Claim 36 depends from claim 35. Claims 39-40, 42-43 and 45-46 depend from claim 37. As discussed above, claims 1, 16, 19, 35 and 37 are allowable. For at least this reason, and the features recited therein, claims 4-5, 11, 18, 21-25, 28-29, 31-33, 36, 39-40, 42-43 and 45-46 are also allowable.

Since claims 6, 20, 26 and 38 have been canceled, the rejection of these claims is rendered moot.

Dependent claim 7 has been amended to depend from allowed claim 8.

For at least the reasons above, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of claims 4-7, 11, 18-26, 28-29, 31-40, 42-43 and 45-46 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) are respectfully requested.

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2. **Allowable Subject Matter**

Applicants thank the Examiner for allowing independent claims 8, 12, 27, 30, 41 and 44 for the reasons indicated in the Office Action.

3. **Conclusion**

Accordingly, in view of the above amendment and remarks it is submitted that the claims are patentably distinct over the prior art and that all the rejections to the claims have been overcome. Reconsideration and reexamination of the present application is requested. Based on the foregoing, applicants respectfully request that the pending claims be allowed, and that a timely Notice of Allowance be issued in this case. If the Examiner believes, after this amendment, that the application is not in condition for allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the applicants' attorney at the telephone number listed below.

PATENT

If this response is not considered timely filed and if a request for an extension of time is otherwise absent, applicants hereby request any necessary extension of time. If there is a fee occasioned by this response, including an extension fee that is not covered by an enclosed check please charge any deficiency to Deposit Account No. 50-0463.

Respectfully submitted,
Microsoft Corporation

Date: August 3, 2007

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August 3, 2007
Date

/Rimma N. Oks/
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Type or Print Name

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